

From: sara.hancock@us.army.mil
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2007 1:43 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: deployment related phone calls

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

My husband is currently serving in Iraq and has been for the last 6 months. He works 16-18 hour days on foot patrol as an airborne infantryman. When he is done working he will call me, but the phone cafe with cheaper phone calls is a one mile walk from his barracks and so he has to pay \$.90 a minute to call me. I suppose he could walk the mile, but when you are already walking 16-18 hours a day and will have to be going back to work in 5-6 hours it seems a little much. I also think that it is ridiculous that AT&T has a monopoly on the calling cards that they are allowed to use as they are usually more expensive than other companies and depending on where you buy them there is a large surcharge for re-charging the phone calls. Also, we live in an area which is considered long distance even if he was to have use of a DSN phone, so they will only connect him through to the local base or post and then patch him through to a calling card, again, has to be AT&T. You mean to tell me that you send my husband away from his family for a year and then you can't even cover the cost of a 15 minute long distance phone call to the soldiers family. I think that is absurd, if AT&T is going to get a monopoly on the government contract for phone calls, I think that they should allow the soldiers who don't live on base to be able to call their families for free as well. Thank you for your consideration in the matter.

Sincerely,
Sara Hancock

From: Dawn Brantley [dawn.brantley1@us.army.mil]
Sent: Saturday, March 24, 2007 1:25 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Deployment related phone costs

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

Dear Sirs,

I received a notice from my FRG leader about your call for input from military families on the costs of calls during deployment. My husband is currently deployed with the 501st near Baghdad. He is an E-4, and brings home, including extra deployment related pay, about \$2400 a month. We are a family of five and I stay at home with our youngest son who is 2. You can probably see that this is a difficult budget in any situation. Now add to that an additional expense of \$350 a month for his personal expenses and then another \$125-200 a month to call home and to his family just once a week or so. It is sometimes impossible. We have to take donations from family members and strangers. It is an embarrassment.

His phone calls home light up our 3 children and give me the strength to make it through whatever is happening at the time. It is the only time I get to talk to him about the kids, how he is doing, and how I am doing. It relaxes and revitalizes him. He gets off the phone feeling reassured that things really are good back home, that his career choice is not going to be the end of the world for any us.

If there is ANYTHING that can be done to help make this crucial and treasured time more affordable for families like mine, I beg you to do it. Hearing your husband's or wife's or Mom's or Dad's voice should not bring more stress to your family. It should just bring joy and relief.

Thank you for even taking the time to consider what can be done. My very best wishes to you.

Sincerely,

Dawn Brantley
Proud wife of Corporal Brian Brantley, C 1-501, USARAK

"You can't direct the wind, but you can adjust the sails."

No. of Copies rec'd 2
List ABOVE

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Sincerely,

Dawn Brantley
Proud wife of Corporal Brian Brantley, C 1-501, USARAK

"You can't direct the wind, but you can adjust the sails."

From: tammy.mcquaide@us.army.mil
Sent: Wednesday, March 28, 2007 2:04 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: *the costs to communicate during deployments*

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

As an FRG leader the most common way my ladies communicate with their husbands is with AT&T prepaid global calling cards sold at the PX through AAFES. They are telling me that the average cost for them is between \$200 and \$400 per month. This varies greatly depending on the jobs their husbands are doing. Some of the husbands have more access to the phones than others. It is very expensive to call home for the deployed soldiers, but getting to hear your loved ones voice and know that they are well is priceless to us. If there is any way that the cost could be lowered it would be greatly appreciated by everyone.

Tammy McQuaide
Co-FRG leader
HHT 1-40 CAV

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List ABCDE

From: , tammy.mcquaide@us.army.mil
Sent: Wednesday, March 28, 2007 2:04 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: the costs to communicate during deployments

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

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Tammy McQuaide
Co-FRG leader
HHT 1-40 CAV

From: Donna Edmunds [monkey829@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 31, 2007 9:32 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: comments

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 1 2 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

I have a comment about long distance calls from overseas! they are too expensive!! my husband has been serving in Iraq with the 4-25 until he was injured last month, and he has spent literally hundreds of dollars on calling cards to call us. at times he would pay 25-50 dollars for a card only to have it run out after 10 minutes. other times at different FOBs he was at there would be little oportunity to purchase calling cards. I'm sure it has come a long way since the war started, but I think there still needs to be a lot of improvments made. anyways, thats my input! thank-you. Donna Edmunds

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From: Donna Edmunds [monkey829@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 31, 2007 9:32 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: comments

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

07-2

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Office of the Secretary

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<http://maps.live.com/?icid=wlmtag2&FOR M=MGAC01>

From: Brandon & Shaunna McGuire [chiefsnflfan@msn.com]

Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 11:29 PM

To: CallHomeAct

Subject: Expense of Phone Calls from Iraq

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Shaunna McGuire and my husband, Brandon McGuire is currently deployed in Iraq. He is with the 3/509th. We communicate by telephone only due to the slowness of the computers where he is at. I get email rarely from him. He calls me about 3 times a week and we talk for about 30 minutes. He has to use a calling card and I recharge his card at least 3 times a month at \$42.00 each time. He uses At&T calling cards because the other calling cards you can only use on certain phones and the lines for those are so long the wait can be about an hour. I personally feel the phone calls should be free. Even if we at least got one phone call a week free would be nice. Thank you for your time.

Shaunna McGuire

Live Search Maps – find all the local information you need, right when you need it.

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List ABCDE

From: Brandon & Shaunna McGuire [chiefsnflfan@msn.com]

Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 11:29 PM

To: CallHomeAct

Subject: Expense of Phone Calls from Iraq

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

09-2

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Shaunna McGuire

Live Search Maps – find all the local information you need, right when you need it.

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

09-2

From: Claire Lettow [pscl1@uaa.alaska.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2007 2:00 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: 'Call Home Act' input from military spouse

My husband is currently deployed to Iraq with the 4-25th airborne infantry. I have been told that the FCC is requesting comments from military families about communication methods and the costs associated with service providers.

I would first like to point out that the few occasions that my husband was able to call me during the first few months of his deployment, the relay phones did not work. Furthermore, phone cards were not made available to him and his comrades. Consequently, after standing in line for on average an hour, he had to call me collect. I have incurred over \$100 in collect call bills as a result.

Secondly, I would also like to point out that postage has been burdensome. I appreciate the military kits of boxes and packing tape that the postal service has made available to those of us who send packages to our soldiers. I have sent my husband over twenty packages of things he needs, and things like cookies for morale, which has totaled well over \$200 in postage.

E-mail and instant messaging is obviously a main means of communication for my husband and I since he was able to get wireless internet in his room. Although I am happy that I am able to talk to my husband on the computer so often because of the wireless internet, I am not thrilled that my husband has to pay for it. Furthermore, I am not happy with those who are responsible for maintaining the internet at my husband's location. Due to bandwidth constraints, my husband has not been able to see my webcam for several months. This is disappointing, seeing as how I specifically bought a webcam so he could see me.

I have the following suggestions to help the spouses with communication:

- 1) If telephone service is not available for free, and phone cards are not provided, spouses should be reimbursed for collect phone call bills.
- 2) Military spouses should receive free or subsidized postage for packages being shipped to our soldiers.
- 3) Wireless internet should be provided to the soldiers at no cost. Internet maintenance should be fully staffed so that the internet works properly.

I hope my suggestions are of use to you and I sincerely hope you consider these requests. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you,

Claire Lettow

907-929-9503

No. of Copies rec'd 2
List ABCDE

170 Oklahoma St #4, Anchorage, AK 99504

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

Courtney Romine [courtneyromine@hotmail.com]
Thursday, April 26, 2007 8:29 PM
CallHomeAct
the cost of keeping in touch

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

Hello,

My name is Courtney Romine; I am an Army spouse and my husband is currently deployed to Iraq. We are stationed at Fort Richardson, Alaska, and he has been gone since October. In the almost 7 months he has been gone, we have spent about \$25/month on phone calls. I think that is more than reasonable - we have been buying the SPAWAR calling cards that are 10 hours for \$25. Of course, my husband rarely GETS to a phone, which is why we can make that last a month or two. I guess that's more of my issue than the cost - it would be wonderful if the guys over there could have more phones. When they are already run ragged and short on sleep, I hate for my husband or anyone to be getting up in the middle of the night to use the phone just because that's the only time there's not a 2 hour wait. Other than those phone cards, my husband has purchased a phone over there and buys minutes for it, but I have no idea how much that is. He also has paid to have internet service in his "room" but it rarely works, and again, the line for computer time in the internet cafe is just too long.

So I guess to sum up my feelings, we haven't spent a whole lot, but we haven't been able to communicate a lot, either. I do hope something can get done to improve communication; our daughters are 4 and 7, and they have only spoken to Daddy a handful of times since he's been gone, either because they're asleep when he has to call, or because we only have a few minutes that he can talk.

Thank you, on behalf of all military families, for anything that can be done to help!

Sincerely,
Courtney Romine

Connect to the next generation of MSN Messenger <http://imagine-msn.com/messenger/launch80/default.aspx?locale=en-us&source=wlmailtagline>

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From: Sarah Ownby [sarahownby@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, April 27, 2007 2:53 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Cost of calling

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

To whom it may concern,

I am replying to an email requesting that we provide you with information about how much it costs to talk with our husbands overseas. My husband is currently in Iraq. Our main mean of communication is telephone although I believe he would use the internet more often if it was available to him. We have spent about \$400 of our own money on phone cards and that is not including the phone cards that various groups send him in care packages. He has spent an additional \$100 or more on internet fees for a poor connection and such slow processing that it has made it almost worthless because you only get 30 minutes at a time. That is barely enough to check your email, no time to respond because the connection is so slow (which is why we talk on the phone).

I thank you for being interested and I hope this information is helpful. I would appreciate being able to talk to my husband without it costing so much. Communication is vital in keeping a marriage healthy.

Sincerely,
Sarah Thompson

MSN is giving away a trip to Vegas to see Elton John. Enter to win today.
<http://msnconcertcontest.com?icid-nceltontagline>

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<http://msnconcertcontest.com?icid-nceltontagline>

From: Alexis Aiello [alexisaiello@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 27, 2007 3:37 PM

To: CallHomeAct

Subject: Communication costs

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

My husband is on his second deployment to Iraq. In order to communicate with him I am able to send him emails or talk to him online. In order for him to go online he must wait at an internet center or pay a cost of approximately \$30 a month for their own satellite connection or pay about \$20 a month for a connection in their room provided by the base itself, but is a horrible and slow connection that is basically useless. Also, depending on what base he is on, he may have to pay an internet fee of about \$2 an hour in order to use the internet. This becomes a hassle because his time is limited and waiting in lines for phones and internet on top of having to pay for it becomes cumbersome. Also, in order for him to be able to call me or anyone else, he must purchase some kind of refillable calling card. At some bases he had to purchase AT&T calling cards which cost about \$20 for 45 minutes of talk time. At other bases, he uses satellite phones that cost about \$25 for 10 hours of talk time. Either way, it is quite ridiculous that these men and women have to be separated for such a long time from their families and then have to spend good amounts of money in order to actually communicate with their loved ones back home. Also, where my husband is stationed they used to be able to use webcams so that men could see their wives and children, they no longer allow the use of webcams in the internet center and since the internet that they can get in their rooms has a horrible connection, they cannot use webcams there either.

Overall, I believe that these men and women pay a big enough price of having to deal with dangerous situations and death and injury along with having to be separated from their loved ones for such a great length of time (15 months is a very long time) that it is utterly ridiculous that they have to pay to communicate to those back at home and have to take so much time out of their day to be able to get on the phones and internet because of the lines they have to stand in to actually use the devices. These men and women do not get paid enough for what they have to endure and then their wives and families have to pay even more just to be able to talk to them; this is unforgiving.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have about this situation and my thoughts.

Alexis Aiello
(wife of a staff sergeant in the 3-509, 4 BCT, 25ID)

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From: Alexis Aiello [alexisaiello@gmail.com]

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

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Alexis Aiello
(wife of a staff sergeant in the 3-509, 4 BCT, 25ID)

From: P Soler [solerjeff@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, April 28, 2007 6:07 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: questions regarding communications with soldiers
Importance: High

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JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

09-2

My son serves in a FOB in SW Baghdad.

NO cell phones are allowed; other units can use and have cell phones or satellite phones, but his section of the Army forbids it. Why? The rules should be the same regardless of the unit he is assigned to.

His area has landlines only. Phone access is very limited and there are over 3,000 personnel on site.

Internet access is worse. If we are trying to send a pix, the system cannot handle it on his end.

The situation is atrocious and should be fixed immediately.

We are told that it is because his unit/Regiment is at the bottom of the totem pole when it comes to funding, etc. An ammo depot that was destroyed 7 months ago has yet to be fixed -- why? Because the engineers are needed on patrol. Ranger units, the 82nd and the 101st all get more funding and better equipment. Since they are all fighting the same war, let's equalize the distribution of needed equipment and access

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From: robinann.tobin@us.army.mil

Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 5:22 PM

To: CallHomeAct

Subject: communication

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

To Whom it may concern,

My husband is deployed in Iraq. I hear from him on e-mail maybe once a week. I have never had a video teleconference or seen his face by web cam, but we send him the vidi videos. I talk to him on the phone about once a week and spend about \$200 a month on phone card.

RobinAnn Tobin

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Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 5:22 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: communication

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RobinAnn Tobin

From: Sarah Poe [sarahpoe06@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2007 11:23 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Calling card costs

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

Sir or Madam, I am emailing you regrading the call home act. My wonderful husband is currently serving in Iraq for his 15 month tour like the rest of our courageous troops. He is with 3/509Th C Co Infantry . He will now be gone away from the FOB for 27 days out of a month from what I hear, he will not be calling home as often as before our mission changed course. When he first left to Iraq our 3 year old son and myself would talk to him 2-3 times a week, that was costly talking 20 at a time. Not to mention most of the phones over there are not working properly and between that and the distance I guess we often get disconnected from one another and he said it would subtract more minutes from his card than we were speaking. Then he got promoted to E6 and they started going away 2 weeks out of 4 and I was lucky to talk to him once or twice while being back on the FOB. Even talking 2 times a month to his mother father and myself our statement was showing over \$100 a month. So any help would be greatly appreciated. Those men and women work so hard over there and out of theater. They are wearing thin over there , with 12 hours out and not much sleep before they are sent back to a duty that they need to be aware at all times, then the extension on top of our brigades very high number death toll. I am not complaining just telling our story. My husband loves his job , we are both grateful of all the Army does for us. He reenlisted to go over there he said it's not going to be easy. My point is that i think a moral booster is really needed and that would be appreciated by all of them to save a little extra every month. Thank you for your time.

Wife of SSG Poe 3/509Th C Co AK

Sarah Poe
home 907-428-1051
cell 907-632-6420
p9sr@aol.com and sarahpoe06@yahoo.com
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Physical, Financial, Environmental and Personal Wellness!

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Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2007 11:23 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Calling card costs

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JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

Sir or Madam, I am emailing you regrading the call home act. My wonderful husband is currently serving in Iraq for his 15 month tour like the rest of our courageous troops. He is with 3/509Th C Co Infantry . He will now be gone away from the FOB for 27 days out of a month from what I hear, he will not be calling home as often as before our mission changed course. When he first left to Iraq our 3 year old son and myself would talk to him 2-3 times a week, that was costly talking 20 at a time. Not to mention most of the phones over there are not working properly and between that and the distance I guess we often get disconnected from one another and he said it would subtract more minutes from his card than we were speaking. Then he got promoted to E6 and they started going away 2 weeks out of 4 and I was lucky to talk to him once or twice while being back on the FOB. Even talking 2 times a month to his mother, father and myself our statement was showing over \$100 a month. So any help would be greatly appreciated. Those men and women work so hard over there and out of theater. They are wearing thin over there , with 12 hours out and not much sleep before they are sent back to a duty that they need to be aware at all times, then the extension on top of our brigades very high number death toll. I am not complaining just telling our story. My husband loves his job , we are both grateful of all the Army does for us. He reenlisted to go over there he said it's not going to be easy. My point is that i think a moral booster is really needed and that would be appreciated by all of them to save a little extra every month. Thank you for your time.

Wife of SSG Poe 3/509Th C Co AK

Sarah Poe
home 907-428-1051
cell 907-632-6420
p9sr@aol.com and sarahpoe06@yahoo.com
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From: AMBER WEAVER [amber.weaver@hotmail.com]

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Sent: Wednesday, May 09, 2007 6:14 PM

To: CallHomeAct

JUN 12 2007

Subject: Deployment costs

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

To Whom it May Concern,

My husband is currently deployed. I am writing to make sure you are aware of the monetary costs for us to stay in touch with each other. Every day I write my husband a letter. So I have the expense of postage, paper, envelopes and cards. We've purchased over \$400 in calling cards that are automatically refilled so we don't get disconnected. I'm not sure how much longer the cards will last and my husband isn't due back for 7 months. Also keep in mind you can't use just any calling card. ATT is only for certain areas of Iraq then you have Spa ware, etc. for other areas of the country. Those are the basics. It's hard to stay connected. Right now we are currently debating over purchasing internet access for my husband but it would cost around \$200 a month. That would be used on his \$800 laptop that he took back after leave. Of course without his own personal internet access he could use always wait in line to get on a army computer but he'd rather hear my voice over the phone, so he waits in line to call me. If I'm lucky he calls 4 times a month, more or less depending on missions, time differences, phones being off because of casualties etc. There is also the expense of each of us having a digital camera and accessories to send pictures back and forth to each other. Many families also send home movies so you have the expense of video cameras and accessories. For easter my friend filmed her daughters coloring easter eggs and hunting them to send their daddy. It was sad. I understand that our husbands are soldiers and this is what they do. That's fine. We love them and miss them. Please understand there are many expenses involved in deployments. We need some additional funds to stay connected. Those who don't have the money for the 'extras' go without but so does their relationship. They don't feel so connected to their spouse and/or kids. It hurts everyone involved.

Below is a recap of the expenses. Thank you for your time. Please help our military families stay connected.

Communication Expenses

- Postage (41 cents a day for 15 months)
- Cards, paper, envelopes
- Calling Cards
- Computer
- Internet Access, Videos, Webcam
- Digital Cameras & Accessories
- Video Camera & Accessories

God Bless,

Amber Weaver
P.O. Box 877246
Wasilla, AK 99687

Now you can see trouble...before he arrives. Check it out for yourself!

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P.O. Box 877246
Wasilla, AK 99687

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From: michael.watto@us.army.mil
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2007 9:21 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Overseas Calls to Home

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

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What seems atrocious and unfair to me is that State Department employees can call any where, any time for free, yet Soldiers have to pay to call home.

Michael B. Watto, DO
MAJ, MC, FS
Brigade Surgeon
4th IBCT(ABN), 25th ID

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